

Message Text

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10

ACTION AID-20

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 IO-13 ADP-00 DPW-01 ABF-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 IGA-02 SR-02 ORM-03

RSR-01 /124 W

----- 051541

R 241206Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5543

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 5935

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID

SUBJECT: U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO RED CROSS INDOCHINA OPERATIONAL
GROUP

REF: STATE 166349

1. WE WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO MAKING AVAILABLE UP TO \$2
MILLION TO INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS FOR INDOCHINA
OPERATIONAL GROUP AND GRANT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO RLG. WE
WONDER, HOWEVER, GIVEN TIGHTNESS OF FUNDS, WHETHER THESE \$2
MILLION COULD NOT BE UTILIZED MORE EFFECTIVELY IN ALREADY SHORT-
FUNDED BI-LATERAL HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES WITHIN INDOCHINA.

2. WITH THE ENORMOUS INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF RICE IN THAILAND
AND THE VERY REAL POSSIBILITIES OF SERIOUS SHORTAGES IN THE
AVAILABILITIES OF PL-480 COMMODITIES, WE HERE CAN FORESEE CON-
SIDERABLE INCREASE IN THE COST OF FEEDING ROUGHLY 370,000
REFUGEES.

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3. REINFORCED ICRC TEAM HAS DEMONSTRATED CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT MODEST ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN LAOS. EXPERIENCE HERE WITH TWO MEDICAL TEAMS PROVIDED BY THE ICRC (ONE JAPANESE, ONE BRITISH) LEAD US TO BELIEVE THAT COORDINATION WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OF ICRC/IOG ACTIVITIES FACILITATE HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND AVOID DUPLICATION. ICRC/IOG EFFORTS ARE, HOWEVER, ADDITIVE TO PRESENT ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE RLG/USG IN TAKING CARE OF REFUGEES.

4. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, TWO LAO PARTIES APPEAR CLOSE TO CONCLUDING AGREEMENT WHICH PROVIDES FOR ESTABLISHING NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT IN WHICH PATHET LAO AND RLG WILL HEAD AN EQUAL NUMBER OF MINISTRIES. WE ASSUME THAT CONGRESSIONAL RESTRAINTS ON USE OF AID FUNDS FOR NORTH VIETNAM (MENTIONED PARA ONE REFTEL) WILL NOT APPLY WITH RESPECT TO PROJECTS FOR AREAS NOW UNDER CONTROL OF PATHET LAO. IT MAY WELL BE THAT ICRC ASSISTANCE IN LPF-CONTROLLED AREAS, WITH KNOWN INPUTS FROM THE USG, WOULD BE WELCOMED BOTH BY LPF AND RLG AS A MEANS OF FURTHERING RECONCILIATION IN LAOS.
DEAN

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